

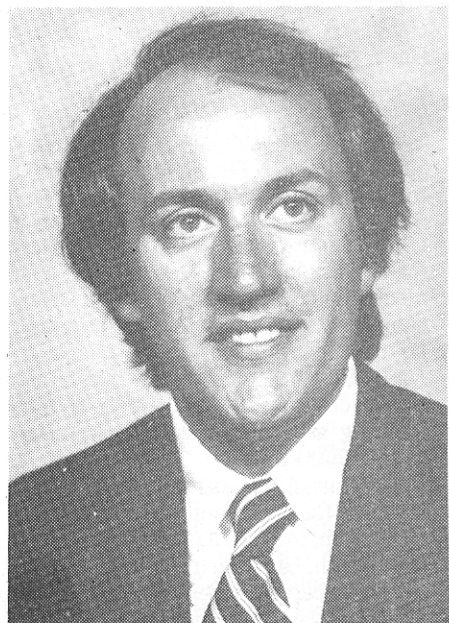
Southeast News

PUBLISHED BY THE SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

VOLUME 28

FEBRUARY, 1978

NUMBER 1



REV. GEORGE BENNETT

Rev. Bennett Called To New Church Start

Rev. George Bennett, a United Church of Christ minister, was commissioned on January 16, 1978 by the Southeast Conference Board of Directors to call into being a new United Church of Christ congregation in Gwinnett County, GA, a growing suburban area on the outskirts of Atlanta.

Rev. Bennett is eminently qualified for this task. A 1962 graduate of Florida State University, Rev. Bennett received his STB degree from Boston University School of Theology in 1965 after which he was a PhD candidate at New York University from 1972-73. During this time he served in an associate position in two New England UCC churches and was called in 1968 as minister of Ridgebury Congregational Church, UCC, Ridgefield, Conn. In 1973 he became minister of Community Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Atlanta which he served through January 1 of this year.

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POST INSTALLED AS UCC PRESIDENT

The Rev. Avery D. Post was installed as the fourth President of the United Church of Christ at a Service of Worship and Installation held at Old First Reformed Church, Philadelphia, PA on Sunday morning, December 4, 1977.

A Service of Communion and Celebration was held on Sunday afternoon in connection with the installation. Two of the former presidents were present and participated in the services — Dr. Ben M. Herbster, the first President and Dr. Joseph H. Evans, the third President and now secretary of the UCC. Dr. Robert V. Moss, the second president, died in 1976 while in office.

Dr. Post has served in the United Church of Christ as a pastor and most recently, as the Conference Minister of the Massachusetts UCC Conference.

17/76

Achievement Fund: It's Up to Us!

With the official conclusion of the 17/76 Achievement Fund Campaign looming ahead of us this spring, participating churches in the campaign face a real challenge.

As of December 31, 1977, some \$60,000 in contributions has been received in the Conference Office toward the Conference Primary Goal of \$70,000. Such a giving record over the past three years has been excellent, but we still have an opportunity to go "over the top" of our \$70,000 primary goal.

Letters were recently forwarded to the pastors of all participating churches urging any additional measures in their local churches to bring the Conference Campaign to a satisfying conclusion. With three of the six AMA Colleges — which are the predominant recipients of the proceeds of the Campaign — within our Conference, we have an opportunity to demonstrate — to churches in other Conferences of the UCC — our commitment to the campaign.

Requests for material or assistance may

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Feel the Need/Share the Gift: One Great Hour of Sharing

Watch for it; it's coming! "Watch for what?" you ask, "What's coming?" Why your congregation's material for promotion of the annual One Great Hour of Sharing all-church offering: That's what is coming! This offering is taken in most congregations on the Fourth Sunday in Lent, which this year falls on March 5. This year, the theme for OGHS is "Feel the Need/Share the Gift."

How many times have you heard — or said — "Make the need seem real"? This year's OGHS poster seeks to do just that by picturing vocational training, agricultural development, the feeding of refugees — all illustrations of how we have responded in the past and continue to respond in the present to very real needs. Young persons in the Middle East need to be trained for what work is available; hungry people everywhere need seed to plant and tools to use to work the land; refugees from floods, earthquakes, and wars need the immediate food, shelter, and medicine we can give them.

This year, your congregation will automatically receive — as a part of the promotional material for OGHS — a copy

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"Oh God!" Movie with Many Meanings

One of the most salient features of the recent movie, "Oh, God!", is not only its message, but its star performer — George Burns.

George Burns is 82 years old — some 17 years past the legal retirement age of 65. He is a senior citizen. And yet, his winning performance in "Oh, God!" is living proof of the vitality, experience and mature contribution that senior citizens have to make to our communities.

But George Burns isn't the only example. Featured on this page are stories concerning two of our own senior citizens — both of whom have been honored recently for their continuing leadership in their communities.

It just goes to prove that retirement age signals not the end, but the beginning of whole new avenues of vocational interest . . . if we wish to encourage them . . . and if we wish to utilize them.

How many of your senior citizens are full participants in the life of your church? How often do your young people work with senior citizens — helping them in the areas they need help — and learning from them in those areas where they are the most experienced teachers?

Think about it. After all, the God whom we worship is the most senior citizen of all. And it is in his mature loving-kindness that we place our trust.

OGHS— [From Page 1]

of the new filmstrip which is entitled "Are You Able to Feel the Need?" Watch for its showing in your local church sometime during the next two months. In addition, your Conference Audio-Visual Library will have available for loan by February 1st a new filmstrip: the title is "LaPaloma de Esperanza — The Dove of Hope."

The gift we share is multiplied many-fold by the generosity of others as we channel it through many agencies, much of it through Church World Service, the service arm of the National Council of Churches. While Church World Service often works alongside other agencies, religious and secular, public and private; always the aid given is important. Often, it is on the spot before other agencies can reach the scene of the disaster. And — because CWS uses local Christian leaders and workers — the aid is continued as long as the need persists, often long after other agencies have left the scene. Always you can be sure that what you give through the One Great Hour of Sharing is both needed and appreciated, for it is given in Christ's name and distributed with His love.



Arthur Shores Is Honored

Attorney Arthur Shores, a member of First Congregational Church, UCC in Birmingham, AL was honored recently by the newspaper and television media when he retired from the Birmingham City Council after nine years of service. Shores was the first black to serve as a member of the Council.

Arthur Shores is well known for his legal expertise and leadership. He served as counsel for Dr. Martin Luther King in the Montgomery bus boycotts. He was one of the attorneys representing Vivian Malone, the first black to be admitted to the University of Alabama. Other legal involvement includes his aid in registration and voting rights for blacks, work against police brutality, municipality consolidation in Birmingham and persuasion of new business to locate in Birmingham. A former teacher and principal, Shores was the first black attorney in the new era to pass the Alabama Bar.

A 1927 graduate of Talladega College, Talladega, AL, Arthur Shores now serves as Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Never intending to retire completely, he looks forward to his law practice and a number of other civic activities.

Blakwood Church Harvest Day Celebration

A rural church, Blackwood Church near Headland, AL, had the largest offering on Harvest Day, Nov. 6, 1977, the church has ever had — \$1,643.55. Both buildings were decorated appropriately. The morning service carried the theme and it was consummated with a covered-dish dinner. "It was a great and happy day," Dora Brackin wrote. In October the church gave \$100 to 1776 Achievement Fund because a member said, "The Lord has been good to me in giving me the best crop of peanuts I have ever had. I want to give something to 1776 and invite others to give."

Mr. Eugene Henderson was called as pastor on Nov. 2, 1977. He is a Baptist studying at the Baptist Bible Institute at Graceville, Florida.

The church has asked Wykle Greene, a native of the community and a member of the church, to serve as the Youth Leader of the Church. He is farming with his father, having received a degree in Agriculture from Auburn University in June, 1977. He teaches the single adult class and was elected chairman of the Religious Education Committee of the Church.

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NEW MINISTERS: Southern Alabama Area

The Rev. John Schofield, who was serving Russell Woods Church at Phenix City, AL resigned to become interim minister at Langdale, AL church following the resignation of that church's pastor: Rev. James Cowlshaw. Mr. Cowlshaw is now serving in the Southern Conference near Charlotte, N.C. Mr. Schofield, who thought he was retiring in 1975 after over 35 years in the ministry, resides in Shawmut, AL.

Russell Woods Church, Phenix City, AL, has called Mr. Rex Williams to supply their church. Residing in Shawmut, AL, Mr. Williams has a good deal of experience with ministry to youth and is now traveling the 35 miles from home to church to serve the church two days each week.

The First Congregational-Christian Church, Alexander City, AL, has called Mr. John K. Murphy to be their pastor. A lay leader for many years and known for his leadership in the Southeast Conference, Mr. Murphy has challenged the

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WHY PEOPLE GO TO CHURCH

Many reasons have been advanced as to why people **don't** go to church, but do you know why they **do**? A recent survey reveals startling figures on reasons for going to church:

- Because the minister visited them 3%
- Because of the beauty of the church 9%
- Denominational ties and conveniences 32%
- Direct or indirect personal invitation by members of the congregation 56%

The Laity have a very important role in the Growth of the Church! Have you discussed the Conference program for Church Growth with your minister? Are you concerned about growth in your church!



Watch George Bennett's new TV interview program on Channel 36, Atlanta, from 6 - 7 p.m. every Sunday.

Human Sexuality Study Available

The Executive Council of the UCC has announced that it will send one copy of "Human Sexuality: The United Church of Christ Study" to each clergy member of the denomination, free of charge.

This is the study received by the General Synod of the UCC to be sent to the congregations for their study and response. Copies may be bought by UCC congregations at \$3.95 until March 3, 1978, after which the price will be \$4.95. The study guide sells for \$1.50. A response form is included in the back of the study guide.

These documents may be ordered from United Church Press, Room 40, 297 Park Ave., South, New York, N.Y. 10010. Send payment with order.

It is hoped that ministers and churches will give careful consideration to the study and send their responses to the President of the UCC.

Former Missionaries Receive Awards

Nine former missionaries, all residents of Uplands Retirement Center, Pleasant Hill, TN, were awarded medals recently for overseas service of 25 years or more. Presented at an informal service on September 7, 1977 in Pleasant Hill, the medals were given on behalf of the United Church Board for World Ministries and its predecessor instrumentalities. Honored were: Mary Carleton, Ruth Haas, Harriet

When a Dollar Isn't a Dollar

Using the consumer price index as a means of depicting what has happened to our dollar's purchasing power, here are some interesting conclusions. If you gave \$500 to the church in 1967, it is now worth \$278.40. In that same ten years if you increased your pledge 5% every year, you would now be giving \$815.00, but in real dollars that is only \$453.80. And, again, if in that same ten years you increased your \$500 gift by 10% each year, you would be giving \$1,296, but inflation will have reduced that increase to \$722 in real dollars.

REMEMBER: Inflation has hit the church like it has everything else. Do your best to support God's church.

BENNETT, Cont.

The site of the new UCC church, which Rev. Bennett has been commissioned to bring into being, is Gwinnett County, GA, projected to be the fastest growing county in the state for the next five years. The County is named after Button Gwinnett, a congregationalist from Midway Congregational Church, Savannah, GA, who was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. This effort in which Rev. Bennett is now involved is one of the first of a major thrust by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries to establish 66 new congregations across the sunbelt in the next 10 years.

Rev. Bennett makes his home in Atlanta with his wife Martha and their three children, Reid, John and Sara.

BIRMINGHAM PILGRIM CELEBRATES 75TH

Pilgrim Congregational Church, UCC in Birmingham, AL will celebrate its 75th birthday through a number of special events to be held during 1978.

Founded on August 3, 1903 with the active participation of the Board for Home Missions of the Congregational Churches, Pilgrim Church moved from its downtown location, adjacent to city hall, to its present home at 3801 Montclair Road in 1959 in anticipation of the growing population of Jefferson County.

The official celebration of the Diamond Jubilee will begin March 4-6. To mark the occasion, Dr. Gabriel Fackre, Professor of Theology at Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, Massachusetts, will be the featured speaker. A noted author, former pastor and consultant on evangelism, Dr. Fackre will preach and provide a lecture to which all members of the Southeast Conference Family are invited.

Youth at Central on the Move

The youth group at Central Congregational Church, United Church of Christ in Atlanta is planning for the new year a number of activities which include fund raising events and retreats.

Starting on the 22nd of January we are having a spaghetti supper to raise money for a ski retreat at Maggie Valley, N.C. Future plans for the year include other retreats and participation in the UCC Youth Core.

Linda Hankins

DATES TO REMEMBER

Please note on your calendars the following six month schedule of official Conference programming:

- Feb. 8 - Ash Wednesday
- Feb. 10-12 - Youth Core Group, Camp Calvin
- Feb. 12 - First Sunday in Lent
Race Relations Sunday
- Mar. 3 - World Day of Prayer
- Mar. 5 - One Great Hour of Sharing
- Mar. 6 - Evangelism Seminar, Pilgrim UCC, B'ham: Gabriel Fackre
- Mar. 10-12 - Youth Core Group, Camp Calvin
- Mar. 19 - Palm Sunday
- Mar. 23 - Maundy Thursday
- Mar. 24 - Good Friday
- Mar. 26 - Easter
- Apr. 7 - EVCOM Workshop, Atlanta
- Apr. 7-9 - CE:SA Workshop, Atlanta: Bob Keonig, leader
- Apr. 14-16 - Youth Core Group, Camp Calvin
- Apr. 30 - Rural Life Sunday
- May 1-3 - Ministers' Convocation, Camp Sumatanga
- May 5 - May Fellowship Day
- May 7-14 - Christian Family Week
- May 14 - Pentecost, Festival of the Christian Home
- June 9-11 - Southeast Conference Annual Meeting, Southern Union Jr. College, Wadley AL

Scholarship Funds for Continuing Education

For five years the Oak Grove Church, UCC, near Pine Mountain, GA has generously aided individuals through the proceeds of its Country Fair Foundation. This year \$1,000.00 has been given as scholarship aid for those ministers wishing to continue their ministerial education. This money, with matching funds from a minister's own Association and hopefully his home church, will put courses within easy reach of every pre-seminarian in our conference.

Warren Blankenhorn, Area Minister for the Southern Alabama Area, graciously accepted this gift at the December meeting of the Executive Committee of the Oak Grove Foundation. He promised that it would be used with maximum effectiveness. These scholarships are not limited just to the Southern Alabama Area, but are available to all ministers who are interested in strengthening their ministry.

Dorchester Improves Improvement Association

At its Annual Meeting, Nov. 11, 1977, the Dorchester Improvement Association had its numerous activities presented by David L. Brown, President. Located on the Dorchester property, at Midway, GA, the Association now has a Liberty County Day Care Center, with 60 children enrolled five days a week, 7 A.M. to 6 P.M. The first floor rooms in the two-story building have been freshly painted, new carpet installed, meaningful pictures grace the walls, equipment and materials for use of the children are in place.

A Heritage Room has been set aside to house artifacts and histories of Dorchester Academy. Murals on the walls will depict this history. The Alumni Association provided \$500 to renovate and make possible the Heritage Room.

The Center has a Federal Credit Union going and two more employees are to be added. A Bar-B-Que pit and Shelter have been added to the grounds and a new recreation area will be cleared behind the main building. The swimming pool, softball, baseball, basketball and football fields have been actively used.

Dr. Wesley Hotchkiss of the American Missionary Association in New York said to the Annual Meeting: "You have a great heritage and identity. You have deep roots here. The AMA is simply to help people do what they want to do. You have a full-time program without a full-time Director. This means the program you have is your program. The AMA is ready to help in your decision as to what to do with the two-story building and what to do with the 75 acres just North of here." Mrs. Hotchkiss was greatly impressed with the children in the Day Care Center.

City water will be available soon. The Midway Church and Dorchester Center will tap onto the system.

The Annual Meeting was held in the Walthour Educational Annex of the Midway Church. Dr. James Eaton is pastor of the Church. Miss Lillie W. Gillard is the Sec.-Treas. of the Dorchester Improvement Association.

W.J. Andes

Blackwood — [From Page 2]

Blackwood Church gives a tenth of the budget to "Our Concern for Others," which includes Our Christian World Mission gifts.

The church maintains a community-center where many organizations meet.

Ala.-Tenn. Mini-Camp Re-Scheduled

Due to snow conditions, the Alabama-Tennessee Association Mini-Camp, scheduled for the weekend of February 3-5, has been re-scheduled for the weekend of March 3-5 at Camp Ozone, Ozone, Tennessee. Registration for the March 3-5 event is due by February 13 at the Association Office, 700 Bresslyn Road, Nashville, TN 37205.

This is the second of four Association-wide events planned for this church year. A Pop-In, sponsored by the three Nashville churches, will be held March 31 - April 2. A spring Mini-Camp is scheduled May 5-7 at a site near Chattanooga.

Planning and coordination of these events is being handled by a cross section of youth and interested adults from churches across the Ala-Tenn Association.

Educational Program for Ministers Offered

The Department of Religion at LaGrange College, LaGrange, GA is offering both Associates in Arts (AA) degrees and Continuing Education Units (CEU) to Southeast Conference ministers participating in one of several programs. Courses to be offered by the Department of Religion in 1978 will be scheduled as either "Night Courses," "Extension Course," or intensive "Week on Campus" courses.

"Night Courses" are offered to those within driving distance of the college and will be held one night a week, two hours per class. Classes are scheduled on the quarter system.

"Extension Courses" are available for those whose distance prohibits weekly travel to the college. Conducted on a quarter system, classes will be held on Saturdays for 3 to 4 hours in a town central to each association.

"A Week on Campus" will be held for minister and wife on the LaGrange College Campus and will offer an intensive week of study. This course is tentatively scheduled for June of this year.

Scholarship assistance through the Oak Grove Foundation scholarship funds will be available. For further information about these programs in continuing education, please write: Rev. Warren Blankenhorn, P.O. Box 773, Phenix City, AL 36837 or call (205) 297-8163.

THE MINISTER'S WORD

"The whole world prays this week for peace, waiting to see whether the courageous pilgrimage of Anwar Sadat and the Israeli responses will bear fruit.

"There are those who believe that prophecy was fulfilled in the resettlement of Israel in Palestine. Often, unfortunately, these same people believe that prophecy predicts unending war in the Middle East, ending in 'Armageddon.' For such a view there is no hope for peace.

"But the words of the prophets in Scripture are a moral vision, not a blueprint of future events. And we may pray that human eyes will be open to that vision, and that peace in the Middle East will be possible.

"Christian, Muslim, and Jew share respect for those Scriptures in which Isaiah set down this moral vision: 'For instruction issues from Zion, and out of Jerusalem comes the word of the Lord; he will be judge between nations, arbiter among many peoples. They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-knives; nation shall not lift sword against nation nor ever again be trained for war.'" Isaiah 2:3b-4

David Beebe

November 23, 1977

Chattanooga Pilgrim Newsletter

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be forwarded to the Southeast Conference 17/76 Continuation Chairman, Rev. Stephen Gray, 700 Bresslyn Road, Nashville, TN 37205.

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THE FARMER'S STRIKE

Tractorcades . . . blocking entrances and exits to businesses . . . facing severe cold weather . . . farmers demonstrating nationwide.

There are a variety of opinions about goals and techniques, but nearly everyone agrees that better prices are needed for the farmer.

Many face high costs of producing crops, purchasing expensive machinery, and an uncertain market for what they produce.

Strange, isn't it, that Americans enjoy too much food while millions of people in our world are starving. How can we get food to those who are starving?

Strange, isn't it, that the whole earth and all its people are God's, and yet some have too much while others have too little.

In 1975, the 10th General Synod of the United States of Christ adopted a program to combat hunger. Nothing was said about the farmers striking, but we have since then spent 2½ million dollars in the areas of constituency education, citizen action, and aid and development.

The United Church Board for World Ministries spent about half of the 2½ million for rural and agricultural development around the world. The United Church Board for Homeland Ministries spent 38% of the total in support of citizen and economic action groups in the United States.

Fortunately, the Advisory Commission on World Hunger, formed by UCBWM, recommended an attack on the root causes of hunger: aid and development assistance to small farmers, establishment of grain reserves, and the elimination of domestic hunger.

Wonder if we have fed one hungry person since 1975! Come to think of it, when have I fed a hungry person? Wonder why the hungry people of the world don't strike? They have the right to eat also.

The 1977 General Synod did approve what the Second General Synod has urged, "policies that safeguard the well-being of the farmer and the farm family as well as the interests of the general public in the efficient production of abundant food and fiber."

With such great words and votes by our General Synods, wonder why the farmers need to strike!

W.J. Andes

New —

[From Page 2]

church in its Christian outreach. Prior to Mr. Murphy's call, Mr. David Quick of Bonanza Church, Jonesboro, GA, served as interim minister, traveling 125 miles to supply the church.

W.A. Blankenhorn

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Assisting the Southeast Conference: Rev. Robert Burt, New Church Development of the Board for Homeland Ministries and Rev. David Langerhans, Stewardship Council.

New Church Starts Challenge SEC

At its January meeting, the Commission on Outreach considered a challenge to the Southeast Conference to start five new churches within its boundaries within the next ten years. Part of a larger strategy to initiate 66 new church starts across the "sunbelt" during the ten year period, representatives from United Church instrumentalities were on hand to give counsel about site and leadership selection, financing, fund raising and publicity.

The meeting was an eye-opener. No longer a moderate cost venture, it is estimated that over a five year period each new church start will cost at the minimum — \$500,000! This means that leadership is the key factor in any new church start venture.

But as expensive as each new church start will be, the Outreach Commission learned that necessary financial assistance is available. Fund-raising techniques were discussed and a publicity program of the Florida Conference — aimed at raising the identity of the UCC in the south — was presented.

The Southeast Conference is embarking on the first of five new church starts in Gwinnett County, GA, a suburban area of metropolitan Atlanta. Rev. George Bennett has been commissioned as the minister of that new church start. He began his work on January 1, 1978.

Former —

[From Page 3]

Nilson, Edna Sipple, Alford Carleton, Frances Thompson, Herbert Gass, Zola Gass and Carl Sipple. An additional 19 other residents of Uplands have served overseas missions, whether in salaried positions or by contributing their services.

To all of these veterans of the cross: We salute you!

India Flood Response

Communications have now been opened with victims of the cyclone that struck Andhra, Pradesh, India. In response to the cyclone's damage, the Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA) of the National Council of Churches in India had emergency teams swing into action immediately. They have organized the survivors and are securing volunteers to move in.

Upon request, the UCC Board for World Ministries has forwarded one million water purification tablets. Blankets and clothing are also available for use. While there is some money available, and some has been forwarded for discretionary use, additional funds will be needed. Please forward any special offering or gifts in case of the Board for World Ministries.

Tribute Made to Dr. A. R. Van Cleave

Dr. A.R. Van Cleave, pastor of the Wadley Christian Church for the past 28 years and dean emeritus of Southern Union College since his retirement as academic dean in 1964, was honored this past November at a community-sponsored event officially called "A Tribute to A.R. Van Cleave, Sr."

With almost 300 guests in attendance, Southern Union honored Dr. Van Cleave by naming the new wing of its main building the A.R. Van Cleave Fine-Arts Science Annex. In addition, Dr. Van Cleave was the recipient of a portrait, to be hung in the college's new building, plaques and a volume of letters from friends.

In his tribute to Dr. Van Cleave, Rev. Joe French of Roanoke, AL described him as "a capable and effective teacher; a wise, respected counselor of youth; a sympathetic, understanding and trusted counselor of the troubled and questioning; a student, expositor, and convincing preacher of the Word of God; an able and competent administrator of higher education; and an interested, visionary, practicing, and appreciated civic-minded citizen."

NEWS NOTES

The Belvidere Church in Tennessee is noted throughout the United Church of Christ for its Stewardship and OCWM giving. Recently, the church sent to the Southeast Conference Office, \$1,125 for the 17/76 Achievement Fund and \$1,081.57 for the Christmas Offering for Veterans of the Cross.

Rev. Don Nelson, Atlanta, GA, is serving as supply minister of the Mountain View Fellowship, UCC, Marietta, GA. The Fellowship joined the Georgia-South Carolina Association last fall and is meeting in a theater in Marietta for the time being.

Our sympathy goes to Rev. and Mrs. George C. Hewson, 2702 Clairmont Ave., Birmingham, AL 35205, in the death of their son, David, in California. The Hewsons are minister and wife at St. John's Evangelical Church, Birmingham, AL.

Rev. James Cowlshaw, former pastor of the Langdale Church, is now the pastor of the Rodgers Park United Church of Christ. Kannapolis, N.C. His new address: Route 4, Box 490F, Kannapolis, N.C. 28081. Telephone: 704-932-0015.

Rev. Warren Blankenhorn, Southern Alabama Area Minister, was elected to the Board of Directors of Elon Home for Children at its meeting this past November 16. Located in Elon, N.C., Elon Home is a UCC supported institution.

Pyron Chapel Congregational Church, Baker, FL, holds worship services at the Crestview Nursing and Convalescence Home every third Sunday. The activity is sponsored by the Women's Fellowship.

Our sympathy goes to Mrs. Freda Brown, Atlanta, GA, secretary in the Conference Office, in the loss of her mother, Mrs. Myrtle Marguerite Krowl of Shreveport, LA on December 31, 1977.

Some 40 members of Pleasant Hill, TN Community Church recently took a trip to the Morgan-Scott Project to investigate and learn first-hand the ministry being conducted there. The response: all were very impressed.

Gable Assumes Interim Pastorate

Dr. Lee J. Gable, former dean and professor at Lancaster Theological Seminary, has returned to Lancaster to serve as interim pastor of St. Peter's United Church of Christ. Dr. Gable's official duties at the church began Sunday, December 18. The former pastor, the Rev. W. Brewster Willcox, resigned on Oct. 30.

Dr. Gable retired from the Seminary faculty in 1974 and he and his wife, Ann, are residents of the Uplands retirement community in Pleasant Hill, TN. Since his retirement he has been busy, however, serving two interim pastorates in Hawaii and doing consulting work with an ecumenical church in Tennessee.

Mrs. Betty Wickstrom, Moderator-elect of the congregation, said, "We are very happy to have a man of Dr. Gable's leadership ability to be our interim pastor. He will guide us well during this interim period."

Rev. Harold Auler and wife Virginia were honored at a surprise party given by members of Lanett Church, honoring him for his five years of service and his birthday. Rev. Auler writes, "How so many people could keep it a secret is amazing!"

The Devotions Quartet of St. John's UCC, Cullman, AL is disbanding after three years of performing together. Other activities and "a time for a change" are listed as reasons. Members of the group: Carole Hutchison, Mary Stevens, Steve Klein, Dwight Kelley, Greg Clemons and George Fidler, Minister.

The pastor of Central Church, Atlanta, Rev. William Scott, is on sabbatical leave during the months of January, April, July and August of this year. He is using the time to study the history of Central Church.

The Rev. Luther Ballou passed away on Sunday, January 8, 1978 at Wharton Nursing Home, Pleasant Hill, TN. He was a UCC minister, serving in the pastorate, for BHM and as a hospital chaplain. Our condolences to his wife, Elsie.